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ABSTRACT

This book presents the oral histories of one male and seven female retired teachers who began their careers during the 1920s and 1930s in one-room schools in the Texas hill country. These teachers continued to teach until after the desegregation of public schools in the 1960s. The married black couple included began teaching in rural Texas in 1931 and were largely responsible for the peaceful integration of public schools in Kerrville (Texas) during the years 1963-66. The stories not only trace the development of teaching careers, but also preserve the unique experiences and contributions of a generation of teachers who pioneered in combining professional and family life. Included are memories of mandatory church attendance, prohibition of marriage for teachers, loss of students to World War II, and the isolation of life in rural communities. The relationship between teacher and community was very close. Teachers often taught in their home communities, and when teachers came from a distant community, they were encouraged to board with a school trustee to absorb local standards and customs. The stories also document important milestones in educational history related to integration, special education, consolidation of small rural schools, end of prohibition against marriage for women teachers, and end of school prayer. This book contains a 75-item bibliography, an index, and photographs. (LP)

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